

MINUTES
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2003
6:30 PM

The Board convened for their regular meeting at 6:30 PM at the Parks and Recreation Administrative Offices at 717 W. Main Street, Arlington, Texas on August 11, 2003, notice of said meeting being posted as prescribed by Chapter 551, V.T.C.A., Government Code, with the following members and staff present, to wit:

Members:

Ms. Sue Phillips	Chair	Place 3
Ms. H. Suzanne Kelley	Member	Place 2
Mr. Alvin Warren	Member	Place 4
Mr. Charley Amos	Member	Place 6
Mr. Joe C. Sarabia	Member - Absent	Place 8
Ms. Candy Halliburton	Member	Place 11
Ms. Caron Montgomery	Member	Place 5
Mr. Joseph Way	Member	Place 10
Mr. Val Gibson	Member	Place 1
Mr. James L. Maibach	Member	Place 7
Mr. Glen C. Troutman	Member	Place 9
Mr. Colin Bryson	Youth Member	

Staff:

Pete Jamieson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Bill Gilmore	Assistant Director-Programs
Ruth Keith	Administrative Secretary
Jennifer Fadden	Administrative Services Manager
Gordon Robertson	Assistant Director-Planning
Matt Young	Assistant Director- Park Operations
Diana Foster	Park Facilities Coordinator
Teresa Ruhnke	Recreation Facility Manager-Dottie Lynn Recreation Center
Evonne Sandas	Superintendent of Golf Operations
Cory Styron	Park Operations Manager
Michelle Rice	Marketing Specialist
Lydia Zantout	Parks Accounts Analyst
DeOnna Garner	Graduate Park Planner
Amber Dembroski	Administrative Analyst

Also attending: Mayor Robert Cluck and Gayle Lacerda, Deputy City Manager.

I. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Sue Phillips called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

II. **JULY 14, 2003 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Chairwoman Phillips asked for approval of the minutes. Ms. Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2003 meeting. Mr. Amos seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **INVITED SPEAKERS** – Mayor Robert Cluck first expressed his appreciation to the members of the board for serving on the Park and Recreation Board. He then briefed members and staff of the budget situation and financial status of the City of Arlington. Mayor Cluck said the city expects to collect about \$151 million in revenues during the next year, but without cuts, spending is expected to reach \$165 million.

Mr. Way arrived at the meeting, the time being 6:34 PM.

Mayor Cluck stated it is vital to the City of Arlington's future that the \$81 million bond package, proposed for November 2003, receive voter approval. Funds from this bond program would address repairs and improvements to freeway bridges, city streets, and ramps. Mayor Cluck encouraged members of the Board and staff to do everything they can to promote passage of the bond package.

Mr. Maibach arrived at the meeting, the time being 6:40 PM.

Mrs. Lacerda stated she wanted to publicly recognize the Parks and Recreation Department staff. She stated that she believes they are good stewards of city resources, especially during difficult budgetary times.

Mrs. Lacerda stated the work of the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Committee is to be commended for bringing companies like Siemens to the City of Arlington and is hopeful more companies will follow.

IV. **RECOGNITION**

Mr. Bill Gilmore, Assistant Director-Programs, introduced Mrs. Teresa Ruhnke, Recreation Facility Manager at the Dottie Lynn Recreation Center. Mrs. Ruhnke provided the Board with an overview of her responsibilities and activities offered at the center. Ms. Ruhnke showed a video of the PIP (Players in Progress) basketball skills program she oversees involving children ages 5 through 12.

V. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

Comments from Citizens (about Items for Action)

Ms. Bonnie Bowman spoke in favor of a proposed park ordinance revision relating to Dog Parks. She said she was supportive of building a Dog Park in Arlington.

Ms. Veronica Scheibe spoke in favor of a proposed the park ordinance revision related to dog parks. She said she was supportive of building a Dog Park in Arlington.

Items for Action

- 1) **Park Permits** – Mrs. Foster requested the Board’s consideration and approval of 12 park permit requests.

Ms. Kelley made a motion to approve the permits as presented. Mr. Amos seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- 2) **Park Chapter Ordinance Revision – Relating to Dog Parks** - Mrs.

Fadden briefed the Board and requested their endorsement of a revision to the Parks Chapter relating to dog parks. Mrs. Fadden stated that a community non-profit group, RUFF (Responsible Unleashed Fun for Fido), approached the City in regard to the development of dog parks in Arlington.

Mrs. Fadden stated preliminary cost estimates for construction can range from \$30,000 to \$100,000, depending on size, amenities and available parking, with an annual operating cost of \$25,000, depending on the scope of the project. Mrs. Fadden stated potential funding options include private funds, user fees, park fees and/or sponsorships.

After several meetings with staff and many months of research into funding options, Mrs. Fadden said a community fundraiser for such a park, organized by Parks and Recreation, Arlington Animal Services and RUFF, has been scheduled for October 11, 2003. Mrs. Fadden explained to the Board that in order to hold the fundraiser, the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the City Code must be revised to give the Director of Parks and Recreation the authority to set aside the ordinance section dealing with animals and pets in certain enclosed areas of parks that are designated as off-lease areas, or dog parks.

After discussion, Mr. Way made a motion to approve the proposed ordinance revisions related to dog parks as presented. Mrs. Halliburton seconded the motion. The motion passed 10 to 2. Mrs. Montgomery and Ms. Kelley voted in opposition to the proposal.

- VI. **ITEMS FROM CITIZENS** (only about Parks and Recreation related subjects other than Items for Action) – No discussion.

VII. SCHEDULED INFORMATION REPORTS

Customer Service Report – Mr. Troutman requested that staff receiving customer comments continue to contact the correct departments on the citizen’s behalf rather than referring them to another department. Mr. Jamieson stated this is the procedure currently used.

Mr. Gibson asked if customer complaints are increasing. Mr. Jamieson confirmed an increase of complaints, especially in the mowing and right-of-way areas. Mr. Jamieson stated the increase is due to staff mowing every 5 ½ weeks as to the previous every 4 weeks. Mr. Jamieson also pointed out that many of the high grass complaints researched are not related to city property.

Ms. Halliburton requested more descriptive information be provided on the report, such as exact location. Mr. Young stated he would ask staff to provide more accurate location information on future customer service reports.

Monthly Calendar of Events - No discussion.

Police Calls for Service Report - Mr. Styron briefed the Board on third quarter crime statistics for the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Styron said the comparison of FY02 and FY03 revealed that six of the top 10 criminal activities in our system remain the same; activities including vehicle burglary, theft reports, warrants, major accidents, public lewdness and assault reports. Mr. Styron said the six represented over 42 percent of incidents in the Parks and Recreation system. Mr. Styron further stated that some of the issues are isolated to particular parks and facilities and most are random nuisance acts to patrons, parks and facilities.

Mr. Styron noted that this is the first reporting quarter since the elimination of directed park patrol due to a reduction of the Park and Recreation Department's budget in April 2003.

VIII. **PARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

Park Operations Audit - Mr. Young briefed the Board on recent recommendations from the City's Internal Audit Department.

Mr. Young explained that many of the recommendations are already implemented. However, others will require more time to complete due to current resource limitations and budgetary circumstances. Mr. Young further stated that full implementation of the Internal Audit Department's recommendation depends on the department's ability to fill currently frozen positions, which include three positions that are critical to implementation of several report recommendations.

Mr. Young also advised that while the report recommended additional funding to address infrastructure maintenance needs, the department's operating budget appropriation for this purpose was actually reduced for FY 2003 as a cost reduction proposal. Mr. Young said given the city's current fiscal situation alternative funding, such as a 4B sales tax, might be a viable option for increasing resources for this problem.

Background Checks – Mr. Gilmore advised the Board that the Parks and Recreation Department will screen all prospective juvenile volunteers for sex offenses. Mr. Gilmore added that all screening will go through the Texas Department of Public Safety. Teen volunteers who are awaiting background check results could be placed in non-safety sensitive program areas on a contingency basis.

FY 2004 Budget – Mrs. Fadden briefed the Board on the FY2004 Budget and said the Department is anticipating several staff lay-offs due to budget reduction demands. Chairwoman Phillips expressed her appreciation to Mrs. Fadden for providing complex budget information in a clear and defined manner.

IX. **PARB COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. **Planning and Policies** – Chairwoman Montgomery stated that this committee's next meeting date is tentatively scheduled for August 21, 2003.

Acquisition and Development Committee - Chairman Warren stated this committee's next meeting date has not been identified.

Operations and Maintenance Committee - Chairman Amos stated this committee's next meeting date and time has not been identified.

- D. **Training and Development Committee** - Chairwoman Kelley stated the next meeting date for this committee is an all Park and Recreation Board member orientation meeting on August 23, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon at the Tierra Verde Golf Club.

X. **ITEMS FROM PARB MEMBERS**

- A. **Reports from Liaisons to Advisory Boards** – Ms. Kelley, a member of the Golf Advisory Board, stated things are going well at the golf courses.

Reports from Liaisons to Organizations - No discussion.

C. **Board Members**

1. **Linking with Organizations** - Chairwoman Phillips encouraged members to continue participating with the organizations and associations they are members of to promote the Parks and Recreation Department's programs.
- D. **Announcements** - Ms. Kelley reminded the Board about their August 23, 2003 Board orientation meeting at the Tierra Verde Golf Course Maintenance Facility Center from 8:00 am to noon.
- E. **Chair** - Chairwoman Phillips encouraged Board members to visit and become familiar with the parks and facilities they live by.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

NOTE: Taped recordings and minutes of all Parks and Recreation Board meetings are a matter of public record and are kept on file in the Parks and Recreation Administrative Office, 717 W. Main Street, Arlington, Texas. Any Board member or interested party has the right to review these tapes and minutes at the Parks and Recreation Administrative Office.